



PRESS RELEASE
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THREE MEN CHARGED WITH ENTICING YOUNG TEENS FOR SEX

Tampa, FL - United States Attorney Paul I. Perez today announced the return of indictments against Leroy Walter Lasky, a 51 year old resident of Port Orange, Florida, and Kurt Rhode, a 48 year old resident of Lakeland, Florida; charging both men with using a computer to entice a child to have sexual relations.

According to Lasky's indictment, from early July last year through late September, Lasky used a computer to entice an individual under the age of 18 years to engage in a sexual act. According to Rhode's indictment, from mid- October last year through January of this year, Rhode used a computer to entice an individual who had not yet attained 18 years of age to engage in a sexual act.

Also charged by way of criminal information, alleging the same violation of federal law in a separate incident, was William Greco, age 42, of Madeira Beach, Florida. According to the information, from mid August last year through late December, Greco used a computer to entice an individual under the age of 18 to engage in a sexual act.

The maximum penalties that Lasky, Rhode and Greco each face if convicted are 30 years' imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000.

"We will not tolerate sexual predators who use the Internet to prey upon our children", said U.S. Attorney Paul I. Perez. "Prosecution of these offenses is one of my office's highest priorities."

The cases were investigated by the Innocent Images Task Force which is comprised of law enforcement officers from the Federal Bureau of Investigation(FBI), Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. The Task Force is an intelligence driven, proactive investigative initiative to combat the proliferation of child pornography and child sexual exploitation. The mission of the Innocent Images Task Force is to reduce the vulnerability of children to acts of sexual exploitation and abuse, which are facilitated through the use of the computers; to identify and rescue witting and unwitting child victims; and to investigate and prosecute sexual predators who use the Internet and other online services to sexually exploit children for personal and financial gain.

These cases are being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Amanda C. Kaiser and John Rudy.

An indictment and information are merely formal charges that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent until, and unless, proven guilty.